

Distance Learning Center available to all TEAM Kirtland members

BY DR. ALLEN DALE OLSON

Don't want to go temporary duty for a course you want or need? Need something for teacher recertification? How about upgrading your computer skills or improving your research methods?

More than 400 people a month take classes or do independent study in the Kirtland AFB Distance Learning Center, which falls under the Education and Training Flight.

Primarily, the DLC handles Air Force distance education courses – broadcasts from Air Force Institute of Technology, Sheppard and Keesler AFBs, as well as upgrade training courses.

The DLC is also the administrator of the *Smartforce* data base, which provides a tremendous opportunity for both military and civilian personnel to take advantage of 1,200 computer-based courses, designed to be completed in eight hours or less, either from home or work. Most of them are computer courses, but there are also leadership and specialized writing courses as well.

In addition to the Air Force courses, the DLC downlinks six hours of daily offerings from Targeted Learning Corporation encompassing leadership, management, communications and other skills, and offers free Annenberg Foundation for Public Broadcasting courses in the arts, math, science, education, literature/language arts, social Studies and history.

"All members of TEAM KIRTLAND can use the DLC. Most of our satellite and computer-based training programs are for military, civilian and contractor employees, but there is often space available for anyone on base to attend. For example, the Family Support Center is sponsoring a com-

puter class for military family members", says Circe Olson Woessner, DLC manager.

Many DLC resources are for voluntary learning, but there are a great many mandatory courses that must be done at the DLC. Additionally, there are hundreds of videotapes on all sorts of subjects, thousands of textbooks and non-fiction books, as well as foreign television programs and magazines. There are tapes of the daily leadership and management programs from Targeted Learning Corporation, and educational programs from the Annenberg Foundation, as well as language courses and materials to help people study for foreign language tests. Visiting personnel from other countries can come to catch up on news from their home countries. The DLC has TV channels from Iran, Jordan, Korea, Thailand, Croatia and Abu

Dabhi, to name a few.

The DLC saved Kirtland AFB some \$595,250 in TDY-cost avoidance for courses in fiscal year 2002 along with an additional \$182,250 in non-TDY-type broadcasts. In fiscal year 2003, the TDY cost avoidance savings were \$737,880 and \$268,000 for non-TDY type courses. All this training was downlinked with two steerable satellite dishes and at least five fixed dishes, making it possible to receive eight broadcasts simultaneously.

There are three computer labs and a networking lab is in the works. In the near future, the DLC staff will be able to multi-cast to individual workstations all over Kirtland AFB.

Efforts are underway to get schedules out to more people. E-mails go out to announce live leadership broadcasts and some specific courses such as Effective Writing, ORM, Fiscal Law,

etc. There is a link on the Kirtland AFB Web Page and a contact list of people who have expressed interest in specific topics such as counterterrorism or medical subjects. For medical personnel, there are opportunities for education credits. There are direct broadcasts from the George Washington University and from pharmaceutical companies.

Even though the DLC is open eight hours a day, depending on meeting or broadcast schedules, some programs are by reservation only, due to limited seating. Most of these are live broadcasts featuring established personalities such as Stephen Covey, Tom Peters, Erin Brokovitch and Rudy Guiliani. There is a break room with United States and foreign magazines, books and two television sets, one of which features 38 foreign channels from Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe. People often bring their lunch, watch a broadcast, practice their language skills or check out a video.

Community organizations and *Nucleus* readers have donated computers, books, furniture and other items adding to the comfort and attractiveness of the DLC and the Learning Resource Center. The Duke City Toastmasters gather in the DLC every Thursday morning at 6:45 a.m., and the DLC is open every day at 6:30 a.m.

The Learning Resource Center, located in room C-20 is open from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. for people to check out CLEP study materials, college textbooks and other research materials.

Because it is largely a library, to schedule a typing test or to use the new computer-based individualized reading improvement program, people should make an appointment with Richard Hammond (846-1920), LRC Manager.



Photo by Todd Berenger

Circe Woessner, Distance Learning Center manager, changes satellite channels.

Albuquerque Reads' needs more adult tutors

BY JENNIFER E. WEST

Nucleus Writer

A few more good men, and women, are needed to serve as tutors in reading and writing for kindergarten students at Wherry Elementary School, outside the Gibson gate. The good news is that appro-

priated fund civilian employees in the 377th Air Base Wing are permitted 1.5 hours weekly to volunteer for Albuquerque Reads during the 2004-05 school year.

The Albuquerque Public Schools and Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce sponsored literacy program is endorsed by Col. Hank Andrews,

377th Air Base Wing commander, as worthy for donating work hours without charge to leave as an excused absence. Colonel Andrews has said that the program will help secure the futures of local students and will strengthen the relationship between the community and the people of Kirtland AFB.

All employees interested in volunteering during work hours will need their supervisors' approval, Colonel Andrews reiterated.

The literacy program is designed to ensure that kindergarten students are reading at or above the first grade level before they enter the first grade. Volunteers will tutor two kindergarten students in reading and writing during the school year.

To date, 75 more volunteers are needed to help each student receive this tutoring that begins Oct. 4. The tutors will spend 30 minutes three times a week with the kindergarteners. The tutors will read to a child or help the child read for 10 minutes, followed by a writing activity for 10 minutes. The final 10 minutes will be used for phonics and word recognition.

Individuals and teams can volunteer, as well.

A training session of three hours is conducted to help tutors understand what is expected, how to conduct their sessions with students and to allow the volunteers to ask questions about the program.

Volunteers from Kirtland AFB who do not have a security clearance will need to complete an application with the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce. Call 764-3711. Fingerprinting and a background investigation will be done.

For information, contact Albuquerque Reads coordinator Roxane Marrujo at 843-7323 or rmarrujo@abqchamber.com, or Maj. Lisa McColgan at 846-7296. Questions about excused absences can be addressed to your servicing employee-management relations specialist in Civilian Personnel Flight, 846-8079. For a volunteer application, visit the web site at www.kirtland.af.mil.



Photo by Dennis Carlson

Airman 1st Class Joshua Montoya, 377th Mission Support Group, reads to Jasmine Shipp.